

**Subpart E—Unmanned River  
Barges on Lake Michigan Routes**

SOURCE: USCG-1998-4623, 67 FR 19690, Apr. 23, 2002, unless otherwise noted.

**§ 45.171 Purpose.**

(a) This subpart establishes a special load line regime under which certain unmanned, river-service, dry-cargo barges may be exempted from the normal Great Lakes load line requirements while operating on certain Lake Michigan routes. Depending upon the

route, the barge may only need a limited service domestic voyage load line, or may be conditionally exempted from load line assignment.

(b) Except as provided in this subpart, barges operating on Lake Michigan must have either an international load line assignment issued in accordance with the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended, or a Great Lakes load line assignment issued in accordance with the requirements of this part.

(c) The requirements of this subpart are summarized in Table 45.171:

**§ 45.173**

**46 CFR Ch. I (10-1-06 Edition)**

**Table 45.171:**  
**Load Line Requirements for Dry Cargo River Barges**  
**Operating on Lake Michigan**

Voyages between Chicago (Calumet Harbor), IL and :			
Burns Harbor, IN	Milwaukee, WI	St. Joseph, MI	Muskegon, MI
1) Load line requirement Conditionally exempted from load line assignment (must meet requirements below)	Exempted barges must be registered with the USCG Marine Safety Office 215 W. 83rd St., Suite D Burr Ridge, IL 60521	"Limited service domestic voyage" load line Apply for load line to ABS Americas 16855 Northchase Dr. Houston, TX 77060	
2) Where to register/apply			
3) Eligible barges	Dry cargo river barges Built and maintained in accordance with ABS River Rules Length-to-depth ratio less than 22		
4) Freeboard requirement	No age limitation All barges: freeboard must be at least 24 inches (610 mm) Open hopper barges: coaming height + freeboard must be at least 54 inches (1,372 mm)	Not more than 10 years old No age limitation	
5) Tow limitations	No limit on number of barges Barges must be unmanned Not more than 5 nautical miles from shore		Not more than 3 barges per tow Not more than 5 nautical miles from shore
6) Cargo limitations	No hazardous materials. HazMatS are defined in 46 CFR part 148 and 49 CFR Chapter 1, subchapter C	Dry cargoes only. Liquid cargoes, even in drums or tank containers, are prohibited	
7) Weather limitations	If conditions exceed these limits, voyage may not begin, or must be discontinued and vessel must proceed to shelter "Fair weather" only	Ice conditions: adverse conditions that imperil tow or access to shelter Waves: 4 feet (1.2 m) Sustained winds: 16 kts from NE, E, SE 21 kts from N, NW, W, SW, S	Sustained winds: 16 kts from N, NW, W, SW 21 kts from NE, E, SE, S
8) Pre-departure preps:	Required -- as specified in § 45.191		
9) Towboat requirements	Sufficient to handle tow (a) Power: Recommended -- § 45.195(a) (b) Communication system: Recommended -- § 45.195(b) (c) Cutting gear: Recommended -- § 45.197	Sufficient to handle tow, but at least: 1,000 HP Recommended -- § 45.195(a) Recommended -- § 45.195(b) Recommended -- § 45.197	1,500 HP Required -- § 45.195(a) Required -- § 45.195(b) Required -- § 45.197

**§ 45.173 Eligible barges.**

Only barges meeting the following requirements are eligible for the special load line regime under this subpart:

- (a) Unmanned, river service, dry cargo barges;

(b) Barges that have been designed and built to at least the minimum scantlings of the American Bureau of Shipping River Rules which were in effect at the time of construction;